
TO OPEN NEW DRUG STORE

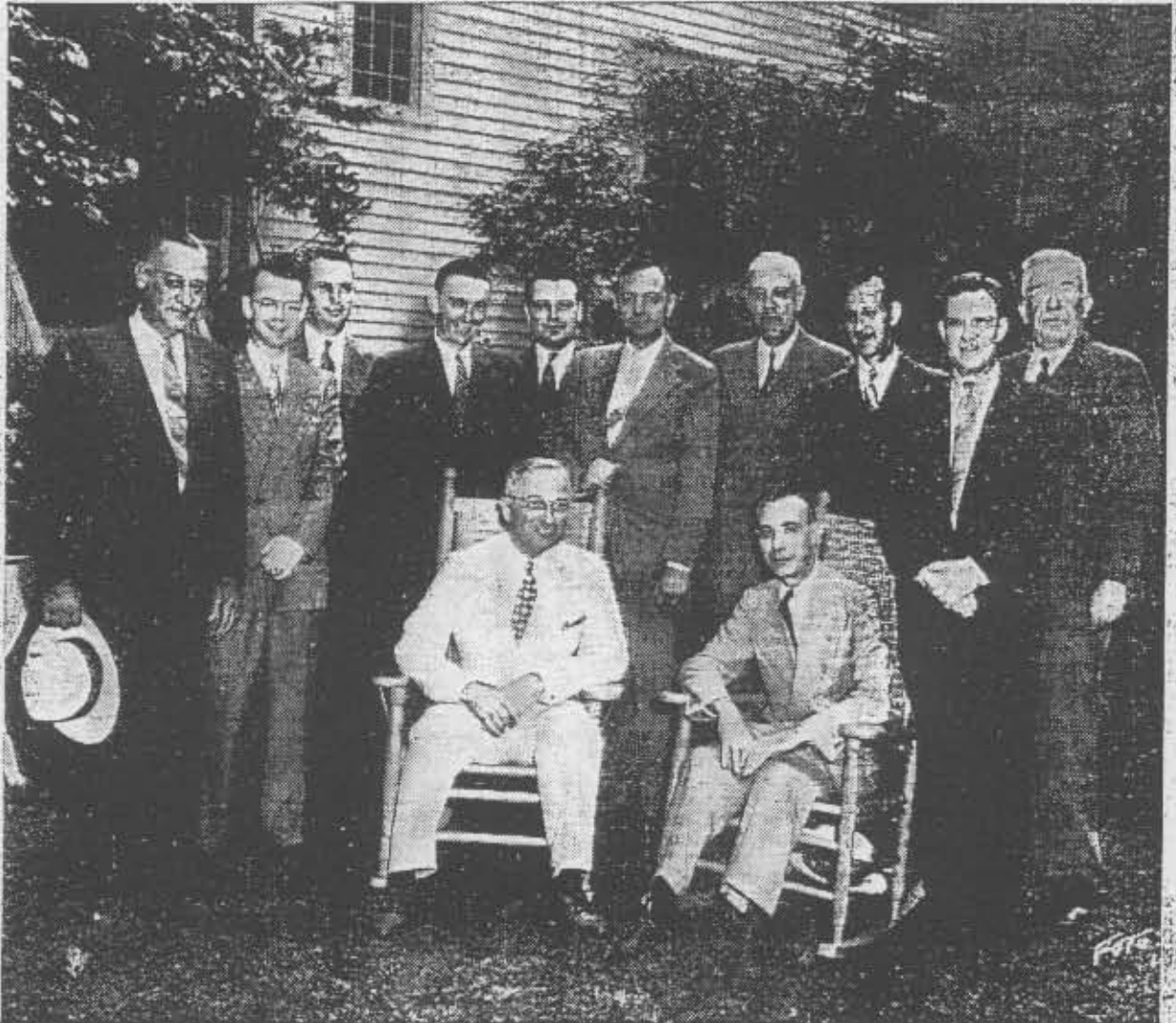
W. H. Childers and D. Grimes to
Go Into Business at
216 West Maple.

W. H. Childers and D. Grimes have leased the Compton Building at 216 West Maple Avenue and will open a drug store.

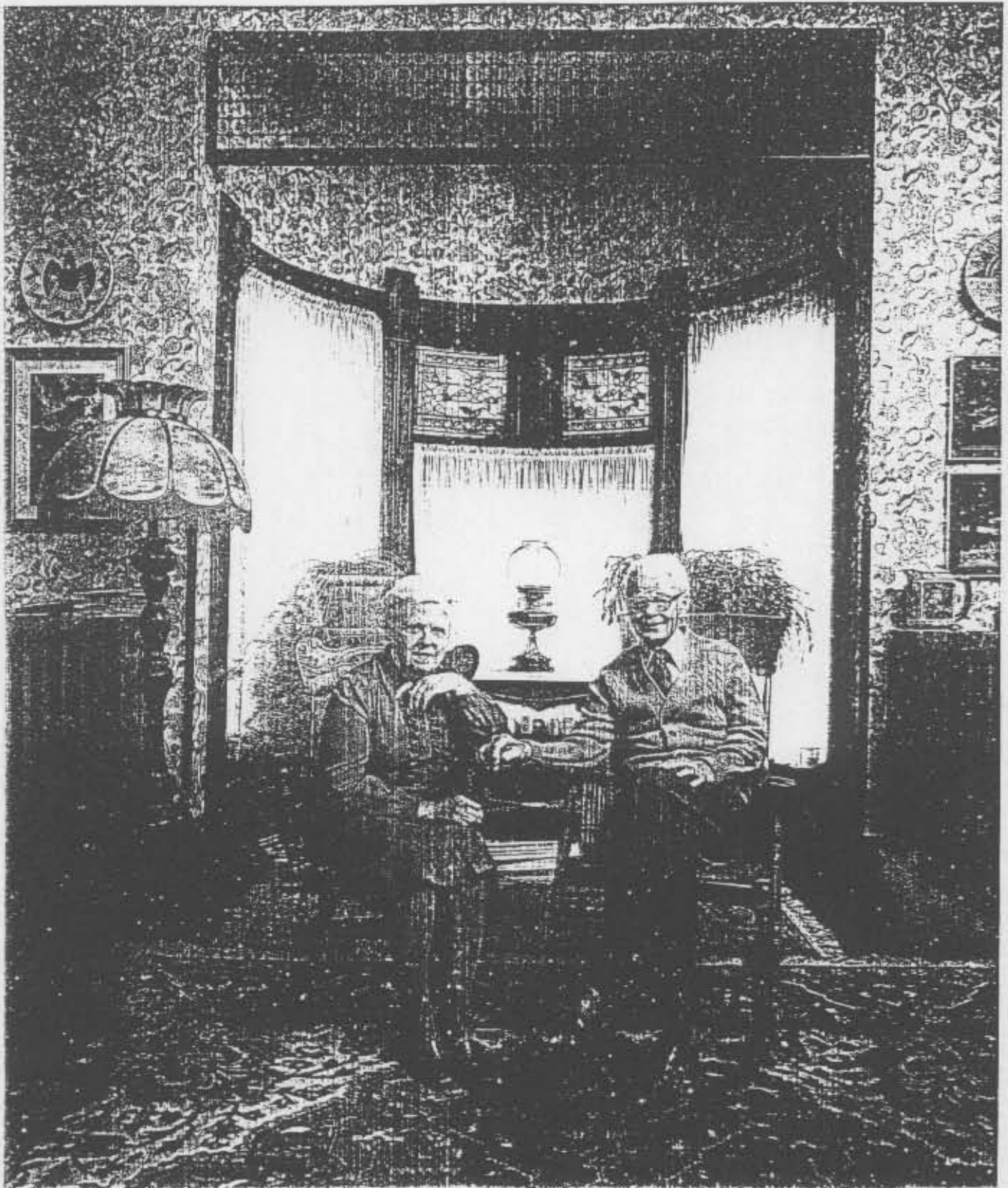
The two young men are installing the shelving and fixtures today and have the latest thing in fountains already in Kansas City to install and expect to be able to open for business in about ten days.

Mr. Childers has had a long experience in the business and until recently was with the Crown Drug, being manager of the Independence store of that company. Mr. Grimes also has been with the Crown Drug stores.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN POSES WITH C. OF C. OFFICIALS ON SUMMER WHITE HOUSE LAWN



Standing behind President Truman and George S. Dodsworth, president of the Chamber of Commerce, from left to right, are Paul C. Ford, Layle Childers, C. Roy Layland, Dr. Eugene Theiss, Harold V. Starr, C. C. Bundschu, Frank W. Rucker, Ellis Tyler, Charles Buckley and Nat D. Jackson. Directors missing are Bishop Leslie DeLapp, William L. Gillmor and J. Orrin Moon, who were out of town when the picture was taken.



Josephine & Percy Childers

"Boy, it was wild the day after that [1948 presidential] election. It really was. Nothing was done, nothing. We had a parade. I couldn't believe it. Well, I believed that the results would be that way, but the rest of the people couldn't believe it. But then they were enthused because Mr. Truman was from Independence. . . . I had \$30 at 15-1 with one of the [pharmacists]. That was \$450. The next day . . . he brought the money in, in cash, and I bought a phonograph-radio combination cabinet in mahogany.

PETEY CHILDERS

INDEPENDENCE

It is very name reflected important ideas of the new nation—freedom of thought, freedom of religion, a chance to make a future on the frontier.

In 1827, the town founders cleared a tract of Missouri woodlands near an Indian path and several clearwater springs for a new county seat and named the place Independence. The town to the north already had been named Liberty.

For more than 150 years, Independence, Missouri, has been making history. Few towns in the United States of comparable size can claim a history as rich and varied as Independence's.

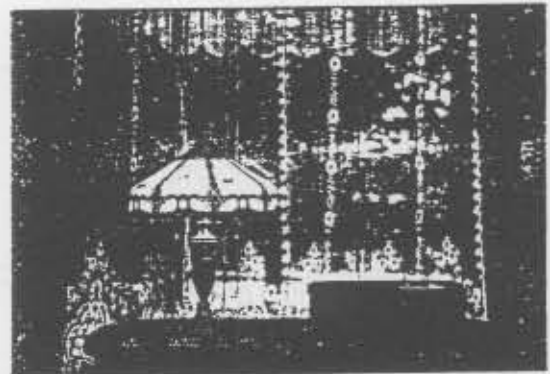
From its town square, thousands of pioneers headed West. A charismatic religious leader designated the city as a spiritual center for Mormonism. During the Civil War, brother fought brother on the city streets. And during World War II, a plain-speaking, hometown boy, Harry Truman, made the peace.

A town, though, is something more than its past. Today the future of the town can be seen in its people, in the farm fields, on the factory lines, in the church pews, at school, at play and in the homes of its residents. Twice the city has been

selected an All-America City by the National Municipal League.

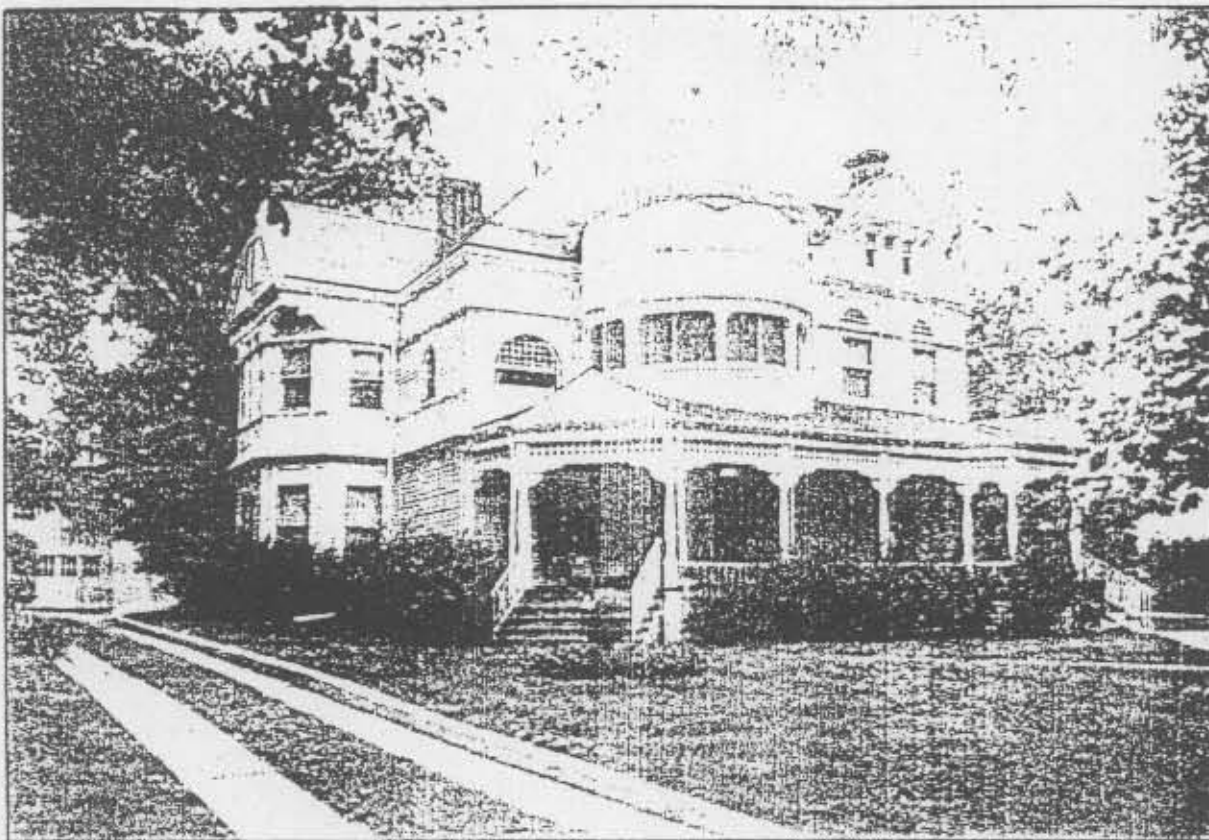
But within that rich history, it was Truman who made the town an indelible part of the nation's conscience. The pundits helped. They made the president's hometown a part of his name—Harry Truman, "The Man from Independence."

Longtime residents, when prompted, can spin endless stories about life in "old Independence"—a small town with electric streetcars, Easter parades, Saturday nights when the farmers came to town for haircuts and nickel movie theaters. Most have a story or two about Harry and Bess Truman, who



Petey Childers and his wife, Drusilla, have been lifetime Independence residents and spent almost 50 years living on Main Street.

Looking for recognition



Scott J. Weaver

The Petey Childers home at 801 S. Main St. has been recommended by a city commission for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

Original stained-glass windows (below) flood the entry with colored light and add to the home's beauty.

Petey Childers home dates to 1887

By Forrest Martin
The Examiner

"Come back about 7 p.m.," Petey Childers said eagerly to his early morning guest as he walked out onto the veranda.

What he wanted him to see at that time is how the sunlight from the west streams through the stained glass windows and colors the ornate front staircase and walls.

That sight still gets to Childers, even though he has lived in the house at 801 S. Main St. for 26 years.

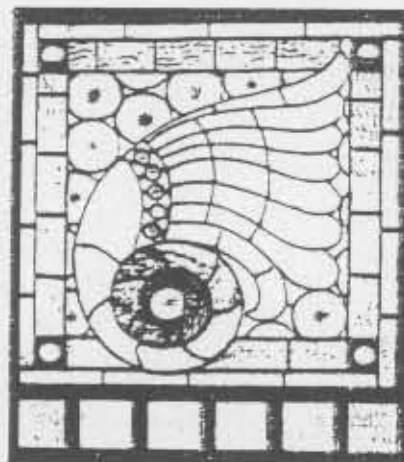
Stained glass windows, typical of the Queen Anne style architecture, are all through the 106-year-old Childers home.

The family hopes the home's architecture and careful preservation will prompt the U.S. Department of the Interior to place it on the National Register of Historic Places.

"The house is old. It's been taken care of and it's still here. I think it should be recognized," said Petey, retired pharmacist and businessman.

"There have been two old houses torn down on Main Street from this general period," said Mary Childers, one of Petey and Drusilla Childers' daughters.

The city's Heritage Commission recently recommended the house's nomination, the first of three steps required. Mary, a Heritage Commission member, was out of state when the commission



took action.

In August, the state will consider the application and, if it passes muster, recommend that the Interior Department approve it.

"They should find out sometime in September if it has been listed," said Rebecca Fulton, a University of Missouri-Columbia history student and former Independence resident.

Fulton wrote the application proposal for the Childers house. She had contacted the state's Department of Natural

Resources office in Independence, looking for ideas for a class project. They led her to the house she had drawn in 1988 for an art class calendar project at Truman High School.

"I'd always found the house intriguing," she said.

Fulton said it wasn't until the 1870s that the Queen Anne style was introduced into America. News accounts of the day referred to the enthusiasm for the style as "the craze for Queen Anne."

The house stands on a relatively flat lot, set back from the street, facing west. Its most significant characteristics include its rounded tower, wraparound porch, asymmetrical facade and stained glass windows.

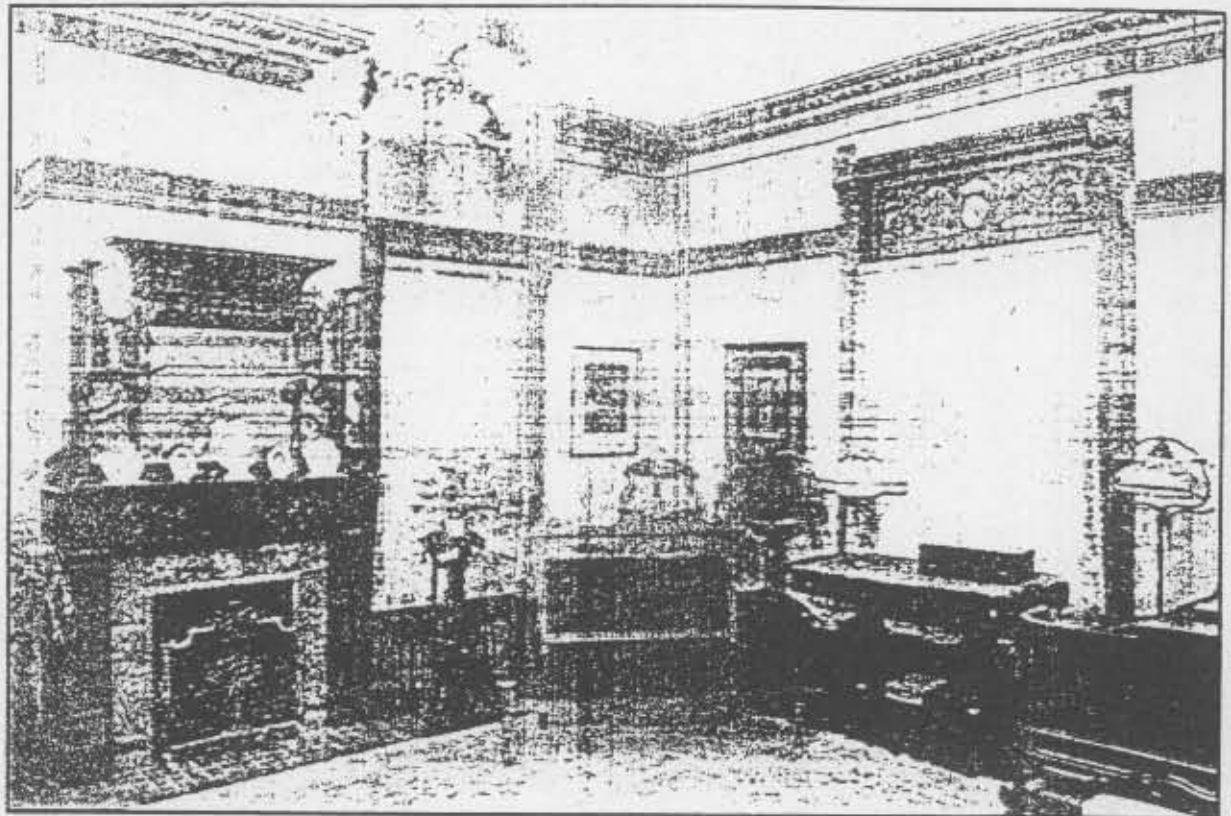
Sitting on a foundation of limestone blocks, the entire house is sheathed in wooden clapboard and shingle. A slate roof caps the house.

The home was built in 1887 for Misses Mollie and Josie Hughes for \$10,000. They were the daughters of Thomas J. and Mary S. (Caldwell) Hughes, who emigrated from Kentucky.

The two women were the sole residents of the house until Josie married Frank C. Wyatt, who was president of the Bank of Independence, and he moved in with them. After their deaths, Mollie rented part of the second floor to a family for a brief time.

In 1929, Mollie's half-sister, Susan

Please see RECOGNITION, Page 10A



Scott D. Weaver

The interior of the Petey Childers home remains much like it has always been. Some of the furniture is original to the house. Modernizing the home

has been limited mostly to improving bathrooms, updating the kitchen and enclosing a sleeping porch.

Recognition: Sought

From Page 1A

Gregg, and her husband, Wallace Gregg, moved into the house. Mollie died in 1933 and left the home to the Greggs' son, Stanley, who was a vice president of the First National Bank of Independence.

Stanley, a widower, moved into the home with his two children where they were raised with the help of his parents. Stanley died in 1961 and the children sold the house the family had occupied for 74 years to Roy Fike.

"The Fikes wanted to make it into a rest home. The neighbors objected. We lived just two doors north but we didn't object because the neighbors did it for us," said Petey.

About five years later one of the neighbors mentioned to a member of Petey's family that the Stanley Gregg house was going in the market.

The Childerses thought it right away. "It never got on the market," said Mary.

When the family moved in, it was a homecoming for some of their furniture. After Stanley's death, they had bought some of the original furniture, such as beds and bookcases. The sideboard and matching furniture in the dining room is original and was purchased from the Fikes. The piano in the parlor was one "Miss Mollie" once played.

"They say when she opened the window and sang that the Waggoners could hear it down at their house," Petey said.

After the Childerses moved into the house in December 1966, they found the roof leaked. At one time they had 11 buckets catching water. Bess Truman, wife of Harry S. Truman, read about their plight in a news account of the house and called to tell them where they could find a good slate roof man.

The job got done. The slate weighed 3,600 pounds, recalls Petey.

"I remember there were 200 pounds of copper nails," said Mary. "They cost \$50 extra for copper. The galvanized nails would deteriorate."

Mary said Frank Davis, the city's historic preservation officer, first mentioned to her the idea of trying to get the house listed on the National Register.

"It's a great example of Queen Anne style architecture," said Davis.

The interior wood is all gum, except that in the master bedroom, which is cherry. The facade is dominated by the wraparound veranda and the circular tower on the northwest corner of the second floor.

The Childerses made few changes. They added a closet, rebuilt a deteriorated enclosed sleeping porch at the back of the house, added a shower and modernized the kitchen.

The house was designed in 1837 by the local architectural firm of Gibbs and Parker and was built by Christian Yetter. "We've got the original plans," Petey said.

FAST FACTS

If the Childers home earns a spot on the National Register of Historic Places, it will join 15 other Independence sites:

- Harvey M. Vail Mansion (Vail Park), 1500 N. Liberty St. Added Oct. 1, 1969.
- 353 Jaff & Marshall's Home and Museum, 217 E. Main St. Added June 15, 1970.
- Harry S. Truman Historic District, North Delaware Street area. Added Nov. 11, 1971.
- Jackson County Courthouse, bounded by Lexington and Maple avenues and Liberty and Main streets. Added Oct. 18, 1972.
- Overfelt-Campbell-Johnston house, 305 S. Pleasant St. Added Sept. 5, 1975.
- Missouri Pacific Depot (Truman Train Station), 500 S. Grand Ave. Added Jan. 29, 1979.
- Trinity Episcopal Church, 409 N. Liberty St. Added April 27, 1979.
- Brigham-Waggoner home and estate, 313 W. Pacific Ave. Added May 2, 1980.
- Charles Minor house, 314 N. Spring St. Added March 22, 1984.
- Kritzer house, 115 E. Walnut St. Added April 1, 1985.
- Harry S. Truman National Historic Site (Truman home, summer White House; Gates/Holmes/Truman house), 219 N. Delaware St. Added May 31, 1985.
- Lewis-Webb house, 302 W. Mill St. Added Feb. 6, 1986.
- Woodson-Sawyer house (Araby West), 1604 W. Lexington Ave. Added March 20, 1986.
- Temple site (Mormon Temple site), Lexington Avenue at River Boulevard. Added Sept. 22, 1990.
- Dr. John S. Bryant and Harriet Smart house, 519 S. Main St. Added May 21, 1992.

Everyone's friend, Petey Childers, dies

By Frank Haight Jr.
The Examiner

Independence has lost a true friend — Petey Childers, a fixture in the Independence community for more than 50 years.

Childers, who once said he was "everybody's friend," died of an aneurysm Wednesday night at the Columbia Independence Regional Health Center at age 84.

He is survived by two daughters, Mary Childers of Independence and Sue Childers of Ashfield, Mass. His wife, Drusilla Henning Childers, died in 1994.

Services will be at 10 a.m., Monday, at the George C. Carson & Sons Funeral Home, Winner Road and Fuller Street. The family will receive friends from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday at the chapel. Burial will be in Woodlawn Cemetery.

Mary Childers said her father

loved Independence and the people loved him.

"He was always doing things to help them," she said.

"I would like to inscribe on his tombstone, 'A Friend to Independence,'" Mary Childers said, "because he had so many friends."

Mary Childers said her father, who was an Independence pharmacist from 1933 until he retired in 1991, said it was a pleasure to serve the community.

"During the Depression, he always saw that the people got what they wanted regardless of their financial status," she said. Nobody had money, but if he could do something to help them, he would.

Because there were no all-night drug stores in Independence during the 1950s and '60s, people would call his home and ask him to fill a prescription.



Petey and Drusilla Childers in a photo taken in the late 1980s. Petey Childers died Wednesday night. His wife died in 1994.

Examiner file photo

And "Papa never turned them down," she said.
Mary Childers recalled the many times as a high school student that she helped her father deliver prescriptions at all hours of the night — regardless of the weather.
We would get up and go to the store where he would fill the prescription and we would deliver it," she said, recalling that at one stop a man came out to the car and "kissed my hand because he was so grateful."

But Petey Childers' generosity didn't stop there, his daughter Please see CHILDERS, Page 10A

Childers: Longtime pharmacist dies

From Page 1A

He would do things like cash pension checks for senior citizens and deliver grocery items to his customers," Mary Childers recalled. "He knew all of his customers and their families and he cared for them."

Because of his compassion for the sick, Pezey Childers provided free copies of The Examiner to patients at the Independence Sanitarium and Hospital (Columbia Independence Regional Hospital) for as long as his daughter can remember.

"He knew the people who were sick and wanted them to be able to keep up with the news in their

hometown, so he gave free papers to the hospital."

Mary Childers described her father as a man who was generous, friendly and kind, but his greatest attribute was that he cared about other people.

"He was always speaking to strangers," his daughter said, and when asked why, he always replied: "It costs nothing to be friendly."

While eating in a nearly empty restaurant last summer in Colorado with his friend, Dr. Ed Holton of Independence, Pezey Childers excused himself and went over to talk to a couple that he said "looked lonely."

"They ended up sitting at the

same table and visiting," Mary Childers said. "He invited them to come to our cabin the next day and they did."

Another attribute of Pezey Childers, who moved to Independence when he was a year old, was his love of work.

"He said his father told him that God put us here to work, and that is the way he lived his life."

At the age of 13, Pezey Childers got his first taste of work as a fountain boy at the Crown Drug Store on Independence Square. In 1933, he became a pharmacist and opened a drug store with his brother, Buddy, in the old First National Bank building on the Square.

In 1958, he moved the store to the Englewood area. He sold the store in the mid-1980s, but continued to work there until he retired in 1991.

"The pharmacy received national attention when it was featured on the popular 1960s television comedy "The Beverly Hills Billies." The creator of the show was Paul Henning, the brother of Pezey Childers' wife, Drusilla.

Granny, one of the "Hillbilly" characters, once called up Childers Pharmacy.

"Pezey? This is Granny," she said. "I need some makings for my medicine. Send me over a quart of o'rauncy swamp water, a heapin' cup o'lizzard eggs, a dou-

How do you remember Pezey Childers?

If you would like to share your recollections of Pezey, call The Examiner at 254-8600 and ask for Frank Haight at extension 117. We will publish a story Saturday compiling anecdotes about and tributes to this longtime community leader.

ble handful of o'dogbane."

In 1966, Childers and his wife purchased the Queen Anne-style Hughes-Craig mansion on North Main Street.

"The home is in my name and my sister's name," Mary Childers said. "We don't have any immediate plans for the house. I don't know what the future will bring."